

# The Bethel Courier.

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 1

SPRING 1991

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FOR 1991 (as of May 1, 1991)

### HONORARY

Barbara H. Brown, Bethel; Maxine Brown, Oxford; Elizabeth M. Carter, West Bethel; Floribel B. Haines, Bethel; Florence Hastings, Bethel; E. Louise Lincoln, Bethel; Helen Morton, Bethel; Persis Post, Bethel; Marguerite Quinn, Norway; Randal & Sarah Stevens, Bethel; Mildred Thomas, Bethel; Edmond J. & Sudie Vachon, Bethel; Edna B. York, Bethel

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### LIFE

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## SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS Bethel Historical Society 1966-1991

- 1966 — Society founded at a meeting in the Bethel Library
- 1969 — Society founder Eva Bean dies
- 1971 — Society incorporated
- 1972 — Dr. Moses Mason House placed on the National Register of Historic Places
- 1972-73 — Dr. Moses Mason House restored by the William Bingham II Trust for Charity
- 1974 — Dr. Moses Mason House given to the Society, dedicated, furnished and opened to the public  
Publication of booklet "Dr. Moses Mason and his House"  
Special Edition of the Bethel *Citizen* published in honor of the dedication of the Dr. Moses Mason House and the bicentennial of the settlement of Bethel
- 1975 — First annual Heritage Day held  
"Family Farm" exhibit and booklet published with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities  
Microfilming of old newspapers project begun with the support of the Maine State Commission on the Arts and Humanities  
Eva Bean Research Room constructed with funds from the William Bingham II Trust for Charity  
Society awarded Certificate of Commendation by the American Association for State and Local History for "an effective program of preservation, publications, and education"
- 1976 — Society sponsors "Old Fashioned Fourth" in honor of nation's bicentennial observance  
*The Bethel Courier*, Society quarterly founded  
Society hosts Maine League of Historical Societies and Museums annual meeting  
Eva Bean Research Room dedicated during tenth anniversary festivities  
Historic marker system initiated, first one placed at Bartlett Cemetery  
Annual professional audit system established  
"Made in Bethel" booklet published
- 1977 — Society offers courses in history, genealogy and crafts for the first time  
Society hosts volunteer workshop sponsored by the American Association of Museums  
First Dr. Moses Mason Award given for best student historical essay  
Broad Street named to the National Register  
"Bethel's Broad Street" booklet published

(continued on next page)

(Past Twenty Five Years continued from page 1)

- 1978 — Constitution revised to add trustees and define other positions  
Broad Street Historic District dedicated by Senator Edmund S. Muskie  
Society receives news of endowment of \$250,000 from William Bingham II Trust for Charity to be received over the next five years
- 1979 — Society cookbook published  
Annual endowment campaign begun  
Historical Society calendar available for the first time
- 1980 — Society sponsors Oxford County Historic Resource Survey with grant from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
First "Sudbury Canada Days" held  
A. D. Shattuck's "Sunset at Bethel" on exhibit, loaned by Vassar College  
Society Director attends Seminar for Historical Administration at Colonial Williamsburg  
Society membership hits 400 level for first time  
Faye Taylor Memorial Art Show established  
Dr. Moses Mason Birthday party held for first time  
Summer house moved to the Society grounds
- 1981 — First film series held with the support of the Maine Humanities Council  
Lapham's *History of Bethel* reprinted  
Indian Raid '81 bicentennial and Indian Raid special edition published  
New editions of "Molly Ockett" and "Dr. Moses Mason and his House" published  
Summer house stationery offered for the first time
- 1982 — Gift of Twitchell folk art portraits to the Society  
Adoption of personnel, accession and de-accession policies  
Museum Assessment Program grant  
Gift of R. P. Tolman's portrait of Dr. Moses Mason
- 1983 — Society loans Dr. Mason portrait and other artifacts to the Maine at Statehood exhibit at Bowdoin College, Colby College and other locations throughout the State  
Society membership passes 500 level
- 1984 — "Grass Roots" history course offered to Telstar High School students for first time  
1880 Atlas maps of Bethel reprinted  
"Adams Chronicles" film series  
Twitchell Portraits exhibit  
Martha Fifield Wilkins exhibit
- 1985 — Publication of Thomas C. Hubka's BIG HOUSE, LITTLE HOUSE, BACK HOUSE, BARN: THE CONNECTED FARM BUILDINGS OF NEW ENGLAND which includes several Bethel Historical Society photographs  
Museum Assessment Grant II awarded  
Publication of Chester Harding catalog by the National Portrait Gallery containing photographs of the Mason portraits  
"Maine at Statehood" exhibit  
Conference on Rural Reform hosted by the Society  
"A Good Stand of Buildings" exhibit  
"Early Peoples of Northern Maine" exhibit  
"William Rogers Chapman, 1855-1935" exhibit  
Society membership tops 600
- 1986 — Publication of a new and expanded edition of Eva Bean's EAST BETHEL ROAD

Long-Range Planning Committee formed  
New railroad stationery offered for first time  
New Society brochure published  
Second imprint of Lapham's HISTORY OF BETHEL  
Eight Honorary members added to Society rolls

- 1987 — Bequest received to establish Austin F. Twitchell Fund to benefit collections  
Marjorie MacArthur Noll Volunteer Service Award established; Floribel Haines, first recipient  
Publication by the Society of OXFORD COUNTY, MAINE: A GUIDE TO ITS HISTORIC RESOURCES by Society curator Randall H. Bennett  
Society sponsors oral history workshop with Northeast Folklore Archives of the University of Maine  
Society receives Harry W. Rowe Award from Maine League of Historical Societies and Museums for "an outstanding contribution to state and local history"  
Society receives a Preservation Award from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
Society membership tops 700
- 1988 — Fifty years of the Norway ADVERTISER-DEMOCRAT added to Society collections  
Maine Old Cemetery Records added to Society collections  
Sudie Vachon receives Marjorie MacArthur Noll Volunteer Service Award  
Society membership tops 800
- 1989 — Microfilm cabinet donated to the Society in honor of E. Louise Lincoln by her family  
Seven Honorary members added to Society rolls  
Society sponsors Norumbega project with the Bethel Library  
Barbara Herrick Brown receives Marjorie MacArthur Noll Volunteer Service Award  
Society publishes BETHEL, MAINE CEMETERIES
- 1990 — Persis Post receives Marjorie MacArthur Noll Volunteer Service Award  
Grant received from William Bingham II Trust for Charity and the Bingham Betterment Fund to prepare a pictorial history of Bethel as part of Maine Street '90
- 1991 — Society membership tops 900  
Constitution and By-Laws Revised  
Second edition of Molly Ockett booklet published

#### **REFLECTIONS OF A HALF CENTURY (continued from the last issue) by Leslie E. Davis**

The winter of 1927-28 also made quite a change in our pattern of work at the garage. Having the highways cleared for regular automobile travel practically put an end to the "snowmobile" business except for an occasional trip to the camps or an emergency trip with one of the doctors into isolated farms where the roads were not cleared.

We had repair work on regular automobiles in the winter, but not enough so fewer mechanics could take care of it. Partly for this reason, I started some outside work on which I could use the extra men from our repair crew. These men were cutting timber and during the winter of 1927-28 I had the first small long log sawmill built on the Russell farm where we lived. Clyde Brooks did most of the work setting up the mill and got it running in February 1928. It was pretty small and rather crude, but it was a start in the sawmilling business. At that time there were no permanent sawmills in the Bethel area and it looked like a good business to get started.



The power for this mill was a Fordson tractor and during the spring I added a 20 h.p. electric motor. Together they made only about 40 h.p. or less and the sawmill averaged sawing about 4-5M board feet of lumber per day. We started sawing with a full crew about April 15th, and I hired Norman Sanborn to run the saw and look after the mill crew.

I believe it was during 1928 that Clyde Brooks bought for \$1800 the place joining ours on the east known as the John Abbott farm from Mrs. Swicker who lived there. It was a good trade for him.

That first year at the sawmill we sawed about 125M board feet of lumber, most of it cut on the homestead farm.

During the years 1922 to 1927 I had a great many different automobiles as I bought almost any car that looked like it was a good trade and the price was low enough, kept it for awhile, fixed it up a little and sold it whenever I could make a profit. Sometimes the profit was not more than \$10 or \$15, but it was usually something.

During those years a pretty good used Ford touring car could be bought for \$25 to \$75 cash and during one summer I owned 8 different Fords. I bought and sold the same Chevrolet roadster three different times. The first time I gave \$137.50 for it, the next time I gave \$75 and the last time I bought it for \$35 and made some profit each time I sold it. I also owned the same motorcycle three different times.

I remember having at various times during these years a Hupmobile 4 cylinder touring car, Hudson 6 cylinder four door sedan, a Scripps Booth 4 cylinder 3 passenger roadster, a 4 cylinder Buick 3 passenger coupe, two Cadillac strip-down roadsters, all of them second hand and most of them needing some repair.

The first new automobile I ever owned was a 1926 Ford Model T 5 passenger touring car. I kept it about a month and sold it to Abner Kimball; as soon as the new 1927 Fords came I bought a new Ford 4 door sedan and have had 4 door sedan models ever since that time.

At the end of 1927, the Ford Motor Company discontinued manufacture of its Model T; during the year 1928, the company changed its whole plant over to manufacture the Model A, which had an entirely different motor and a sliding transmission. During that whole year, Ford dealers in small communities could get no Ford automobiles to sell at all. So early in that spring, Arthur Herrick and I, anticipating that such might be the case,

#### EDITOR'S CORNER

Several readers of the last Courier read the President's Column and expressed concern that the Society's endowment appeared to be just over \$50,000. This is the amount in what is known as the Regular Endowment, which has been raised over a number of years through annual campaigns. The other endowment fund is known as "Sidney's Fund" in honor of Sidney W. Davidson, who was so instrumental in the restoration of the Dr. Moses Mason House and its gift to the Society in 1974. This fund was given to the Society over several years by the William Bingham II Trust for Charity; its principal is now over \$300,000.

SRH

#### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

A quarter century of accomplishments — that's the story of the Bethel Historical Society. Membership has gone from eighteen charter members to over 900. The Society owns the Dr. Moses Mason House, which contains a period house museum, office, research and meeting rooms and collection storage. Special events are held annually — Sudbury Canada Days, Faye Taylor Memorial Art Show, Heritage Day, Dr. Mason's Birthday Party, Homecoming Day, Christmas with the Masons, etc. Numerous publications, large and small have been produced: books, booklets, calendars, a cook book. An illustrated Bethel history is scheduled for the fall. Microfilms of local and area newspapers have been acquired through various grants. The endowment and the collections continue to grow annually. A service award for volunteers named after a devoted member has been established. The Dr. Moses Mason Award is given each year to the best essay in local history produced by a local high school student.

This list of accomplishments could go on; there are too many to enumerate here (see chronology beginning on page 1). All persons involved with the Society over the past twenty-five years can take great pride in its accomplishments. I wish to take this opportunity to thank them all.

Jane W. Hosterman

organized a separate company called Davis Chevrolet Company, with Earl as its nominal head and chief salesman and operated as a sub-agency selling new Chevrolets. This was quite a successful venture and we continued it into the year 1929 until the new Fords were available in quantities to supply the demand.

*(to be continued in the next issue)*

#### NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Lincoln B. and Suzanne Fiske, Bethel  
Charles S. Hazelton, Bangor  
Helen L. Kraul, Portland  
David A. and Grace S. McKivergan, Rumford  
Nicholas Noyes, Mechanic Falls

#### BOOK NOTE

*THE RUMFORD FALLS & RANGELEY LAKES RAILROAD.* By Doug Hutchinson. (Dixfield, Maine: Partridge Lane Publications, 1989.) Pp. 128. Paper. \$20.

Doug Hutchinson has provided us in this well-illustrated volume a historical insight into the history of a remarkable Maine rail line. Begun in the 1890s this line made it possible to travel from Rumford to the Rangeley Lakes. Hutchinson provides the reader with the text of newspaper articles and other secondary sources to accompany the wealth of detail. Readers interested in railroads, logging and the history of tourism will find this volume of interest.

SRH

#### IN MEMORIAM

Died, January 17, 1991, Thelma Van Den Kerckhoven,  
Patron Member  
Died April 28, 1991, Harry E. Parsons, Life Member



*Donald and Arlene Brown. Kurt Brown Photo.*

### **MEMBER PROFILE** **Donald and Arlene Brown**

Two of the most active and enthusiastic workers for the Society are Donald and Arlene Brown, both of whom were born in Bethel. Don Brown was born in 1919, the son of Carl and Ruth Mason Brown. A graduate of Gould Academy in 1938, Don served 51 months in the U.S. Army infantry during World War II with over two years in the South Pacific theater. After his discharge, he attended the New York Institute of Photography. With his wife Arlene, whom he married in 1944, he established the Don Brown Studio on Main Street in 1946, where Arlene did oil coloring of photographs and operated a book shop. Don later joined the family business (Citizen Printers) as photographer/printer from which he retired in 1984. He has continued to work in photography since his retirement. Don's hobbies include woodworking.

A trustee of the Bethel Library Association for many years, he is also a director of the Middle Intervale Meeting House Society, a member of the American Legion, and a representative of the Bethel Unit of the Salvation Army. He is also a life member of the Bethel Historical Society, where he has served as a trustee (1985-90), and been active on a number of fronts including providing photographs for numerous issues of the *COURIER*.

Arlene Greenleaf Brown was born in 1921, the daughter of Sherman and Mabel Stevens Greenleaf. She also graduated from Gould Academy (1939). Following Gould, she continued her education at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston and subsequently taught piano in Bethel for over thirty five years. Also active in the Middle Intervale Meeting House Society, Arlene has been a dedicated Society member. She and Don researched the history of Chapman Street, presented their research at a Society meeting, and worked it through to publication in the *COURIER* (Fall, 1985). She also heads the Society's Music Committee, chaired the Parade Committee for the Indian Raid Bicentenary, and with her husband has been a generous contributor to the endowment.

Don and Arlene Brown are the parents of two children and grandparents of one grandchild, Kate.

*(1991 membership list continued from page 1)*

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(continued on next page)

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*A February 12, 1991 fire destroyed the former Bragdon apartment building behind the Civil War soldier's monument, a Bethel landmark since the middle of the 19th century. It was built prior to 1858 by Joseph Twitchell (1782-1871), who was the first white child born in what is today Bethel. Clark S. Edwards once operated a store here prior to his distinguished service in the Civil War. The property was later sold to Rev. Benjamin Foster of Newport. After Foster, Eli Stearns, who had a slaughter house near Alder River bridge, lived here and operated a boarding house. He was followed by Harvey Bragdon, who enlarged the property and created the apartments. After his death, the property was sold to Butler Dunn, whose heirs own the premises today. The original barn burned and the present one was built about 1908. In the photo below taken early in the century (after the construction of the new barn) a group of men pause for the photographer. In the background and foreground are piles of firewood, probably during Eli Stearns's period of ownership. Top photo courtesy of Donald S. Brown.*





1991 "So You Think You Know Bethel"

The long victorious team of Merton Brown and Cathy Newell was overwhelmed by challengers John Brown and Jane Hosterman (L-R). In the background center is Society Director Stanley R. Howe, who has served as Master of Ceremonies since the popular annual Bethel trivia contest was begun in 1981.

## 19TH CENTURY MEDICINE IN BETHEL, MAINE

by Joyce Wanger  
Part III

The Thomasonians appealed to the spirit embodied in the Jacksonian movement of the 1830s and 1840s by declaring, "Every man his own physician." This attempt to seize medicine from the hands of professionals and give it to the common man was the essence of the Thomasonians practice of use of herbs and roots in a regimen that was patented and marketed quite successfully by the movement's founder, Samuel Thomson of New Hampshire. This movement was generally replaced by Homeopathy, but not before it was influential in gaining the repeal of medical licensure laws in many states.

Homeopathy originated in Germany with Hahnemann and was brought to the U.S. around 1825. Its appeal was based in faith for the healing powers of nature and the relative harmlessness of its use of infinitesimal doses of drugs. Instead of harsh heroic measures, patients were treated with pleasant tasting pills with no discomforting side effects. Although homeopathy was based in an erroneous belief that "like cure like", the treatment doses used were so small that even if a patient took the wrong medication, no harm was done. Obviously, the reverse could be said that even if the right medication was taken, no good would likely be produced either.

Hydropaths took Homeopathy a step farther and rejected drugs of every variety, both botanic and mineral. Instead, they placed their trust in natural cures such as fresh air, sunshine, exercise, proper diet, and above all else, water! They advocated baths, packs, and wet bandages for any and all complaints. The *Oxford Democrat* as late as 1876 was publishing advertisements for the Maine Water Cure at Waterford, Maine and L. B. Chapman, in his local history, refers to the Waterford Hygienic Institute opened by Dr. Calvin Farrar in 1847. The author included his observation that, "... many of those in regular practice exhibit signs of hydrophobia at the bare mention of it." The *Bethel Courter*

on several occasions referred to the medicinal value of Bethel's own mineral springs with a Dr. Fanning espousing its value in numerous diseases on the occasion of the springs dedication in 1859. Water treatments and baths to the modern reader seem to be a rather unremarkable therapy. But in the early nineteenth century it was still common to think of getting the body wet all over as a dangerous thing. The history behind this thought is quite interesting and represents one of those instances where erroneous connections between cause and effect due to lack of knowledge produced an extreme reaction and one that had lasting impact for centuries.

Bathing was highly advocated by both ancient Egyptians and Greeks. It was carried to its ultimate practice by the Romans. Its revival in the Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, however, coincided with a wave of syphilis. Indoor baths were connected with a considerable degree of licentiousness and became suspect as the culprits in the spread of the virulent disease. The public, however, equated bathing itself with the disease giving it an almost taboo status that stuck well into the nineteenth century. Although it was no longer thought that syphilis was caused by bathing, baths retained an undefined bad reputation. By 1840, water cure or hydropathy had reached American society and was perceived as a welcome contrast to harsh dosings, bleedings, and purgings of the regular medical profession, especially for "delicate females" of upper class origins.

Sectarian medicine comprised nearly 10% of the total number of physicians by mid-century with nearly 2500 homeopathic physicians in practice. It is more likely that many physicians' practices were like that of Dr. Ayer, the Boston physician with Bethel connections referred to earlier. Although he called himself a regular physician and was active in the Massachusetts Medical Society, he admitted to being a conservative practitioner with regard to purgings and bleedings. There was not a clear line of demarcation between practice types but there was an ever increasing stigma associated with the sectarian practices. Battles were fought in many professional publications and local newspapers, there were even reports, albeit extremely rare, of dueling to settle differences in philosophy. The Maine Medical Association's *Transactions* record several expulsions from its membership in the mid-nineteenth century for violations of its constitution that forbade "... the practice of Homeopathy or Hydropathy or any 'kindred delusion' ". It would have been foolish for physicians of mixed loyalties to associate themselves with any but the category of regular physicians. There were perhaps many physicians of undeclared philosophy who were somewhat automatically labelled as regulars.

This likely was the case with Dr. R. G. Wiley who is clearly described as a regular physician. Descriptions of his practices are, however, not what is most often associated with that label. Of course, Dr. Wiley's practice spanned a considerable length of time when medical care was in a state of great transition, so it is difficult to know how representative the picture drawn of Dr. Wiley by those reflecting of his career at his death really is. Dr. Wiley had the reputation of using medicines that were primarily herbs gathered from the surrounding woods and fields. He also bought primitive roots and herbs from foreign countries and compounded his own medicines. Pills were made from aloes and soap. He became quite famous for "Dr. Wiley's spring bitters and pills." His practice extended well into the last quarter of the nineteenth century, well



after anesthesia and antiseptics had revolutionized surgical care, but Dr. Wiley was said to be a severe critic of "the new fad of wholesale practice of abdominal surgery" stating that it had become "... dangerous for a woman to complain of the stomach ache."

On the other hand, many of the medical books that survive from Dr. Wiley's library deal with the advances being realized in medical science of his day. He apparently was keeping abreast of the research of the Paris school that was undermining Rush's theories. His extensive use of herbs indicated that Dr. Wiley was also sympathetic to some of the practices of the sectarian physicians. This dichotomy is probably best explained in recognizing that advocates of different medical theories often used similar therapy and were perhaps different primarily in degree. It is also possible that those describing Dr. Wiley's practice concentrated on the elements that were most popular to the patients he served. Good medical care from the viewpoint of the physician and the general population are not necessarily one and the same.

Nineteenth century physicians were in direct competition with a very popular force in the form of the patent medicine business. Large sums of money were spent on advertising in newspapers across the country. Small town papers like the *Bethel Courier* were filled with ads for cures of all maladies imaginable. Sometimes the editors of the paper entered a small item calling the attention of the reader to a particular product advertised in the paper. This fell short of endorsing the product but had the potential of lending at least a degree of legitimacy to the product. Small newspapers especially depended on advertising income for profits and it is evident that editors were pressured by the patent medicine trade. One mid century promoter of a purgative was reported to have spent \$100,000 on advertising, an outrageous sum of money for the time. Undoubtedly, there were profits to be made for the nineteenth century was a period of phenomenal growth in the patent medicine business. A wholesale drug catalogue of 1804 lists 80 patent tonics while a list compiled by a hydropathic physician in 1858 included 1500 such medicines. Patent medicines were advertised on the pages of nearly every issue of the *Bethel Courier* ever published and often claimed unbelievable results. They were sold by local apothecaries. The following ad

from the *Bethel Courier* of April 22, 1858 shows how wide ranging the role of the apothecary could be.

Killing and Curing!  
Strychnine for killing foxes, and Patent  
Medicines for curing people.

For Sale by

J. S. Abbott

Bethel Hill, Dec. 7, 1858

With no regulation and little educational requirement for a distributor, the customer could only hope to not be mistaken for a fox! Regular physicians protested the widespread manufacture and misuse of patent medicines with one physician bluntly stating that "... the public will act as an umpire after a careful perusal of the undertaker's bills."

The AMA, with the help of muckraking journalists, was eventually successful in exposing this great fraud by the early twentieth century. In the AMA's review of this great fraud the patent medicines are defined as, "... a medicine, whose composition or method of making, or both, has been patented . . . a patent medicine is not a secret preparation because its composition must appear in the patent specifications . . ." Public usage of the term, however, tended to include secret nostrums in this categorization. Most "patent" medicines were not actually patented because this revealed the ingredients which were often cheap and worthless. For example, Radam's Microbe Killer was 99.381% water, the remaining ingredients were nothing but acids and red wine coloring. Others contained harmful or addictive ingredients such as Dr. Ayer's Cherry Pectoral containing heroin for cough or Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for teething babies that contained a grain of morphine per ounce. These addictive narcotics did not cure disease but no doubt they did make people feel better.

An article in the *Bethel Courier* of November 18, 1859 attempts to discourage mothers from falling prey to such medicines. It is an excerpt from the *Eclectic Medical Journal* advocating pure, sparkling, cold water as an alternative to opiates given to crying babies. The author argues that babies cry often from thirst since nature's

(continued on next page)

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*(19th Century Medicine continued)*

supply is food and not drink. Such articles are reflective of the editor's interest in medical matters as well as his good judgment on medical issues. Dr. N. T. True was not only Bethel's historian but also editor of the *Courier*. He had graduated from Maine Medical School in 1840 but turned to teaching as his life's profession. On the issue of quackery and patent medicines, Dr. True made the observation that, "The people [of Bethel] as a whole are too intelligent to be duped by those . . . traveling pretenders who make great promises, great charges, and no cures." His implication was that Bethel residents were more likely to trust their own physician than turn to patent medicines as the first line of defense in disease as was the common practice among much of the nineteenth century American population.

Trust and appreciation for one's own physician were the subjects of an editorial by Dr. True in the October 21, 1859 issue of the *Courier*. This tribute to the family physician describes a life of small monetary return, great exposure, and self-denial with no regular meals or sleep. The author denounces the habit of those who speak contemptuously of every physician but their own and recalls the advice of an old physician who urged that those entering the profession should, ". . . make up your mind to be insulted every hour you live." This evaluation is consistent with other reports of the era when medicine was thought of as an almost inferior profession. The AMA in 1851 reported that those graduates from leading colleges who had earned honors were less likely to enter medicine than any other profession. But the very nature of the profession made it difficult to evaluate in terms of status and success. As medical historian Duffy relates, "The same individuals who may denounce the profession collectively, will, in the next breath, swear by their own physician."

Such strong devotion to his own physician was expressed

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by Dr. N. T. True just two short weeks after this tribute to the family physician. Dr. True, with great sadness, reported the sudden death of Dr. Almon Twitchell. One of Bethel's native sons, Twitchell was born in 1811 to the family of one of the area's original proprietors. His youth was spent in serious study and he became active in the temperance cause at a very young age. Almon Twitchell's serious nature was, however, blessed with a sense of humor that many found attractive and entertaining.

Twitchell's preceptor in the study of medicine was Dr. Reuel Barrows of Fryeburg, a well-known and respected physician among the medical practitioners of Maine. Barrows was the first President of the Medical Association of the Western District of Maine at its founding in 1855. Dr. Barrows was also one of the few men mentioned by name as a potential contributor of medical scholarship when the Maine Medical Association considered establishing a medical journal in 1857. Twitchell followed this apprenticeship with three courses of lectures at the Maine Medical School. Following his preceptors example, he gained a good reputation for scholarship, graduating with his medical degree in 1840. One additional year was spent in practice with a Dr. Ingalls of Bridgton before he set up his own practice in North Paris.

*(to be continued in next issue)*

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